

WILCOX & GIBBS.

when you learn the trick, you can wind the thread back on the spool without breaking, and so economize in material. And one thing more, a skillful but usually candid operator on the "W. and W." machine admitted, in my hearing, that the "Letter G" made the stronger seam.

A Glimpse of Paradise.

The truth is, I always stand in awe of one of these pretentious machines; but the Wilcox & Gibbs seems just the thing for a household pet; and I intend teaching my little grand-daughter to use it. Her mother has a Wheeler & Wilson, and was beside the unlucky machine that ventures meddlesome fingers about it.

A WOMAN'S LETTER.

MANFIELD, Pa., Sept. 28, 1868. S. E. M. My husband says I shall have a machine, and I know he means what he says; but he has already told me about our taxes, which, since the war, have been enormous, to be sure, though yearly lessening, I am thankful to say. So I don't like to worry him about it. I wish I knew a way to get one, all by myself; but what can a woman do? I should feel so proud to earn and own a "Letter G."

I ask your congratulations, my dear —, that I have discovered, a little late in the day, to be sure, the one thing needed to complete my circle of domestic comfort! You smile—fancying you could suggest many desirable additions to my sum of human felicitates; but possessing "health, peace, and competence;" the dearest nest of a home; and six-foot-and-an-inch of "a husband who never refuses his wife anything," what more could reasonable woman ask?

HIGH-HEELED BOOTS.

How familiar to every city housekeeper who spends her summers in the country is the autumnal breaking-in of her servants on her return! Most servants are a little wayward after a season of rest, and some cannot bear rest at all. The modern seamstress, if she be one of those

is a servant of this class; for no other gives her mistress so much trouble as she. Upon such a servant, a seamstress in distress has the same effect that a month in clover has upon a tickle horse. In either case a *fracas* may be expected on the first call to work; and when Miss Double-thread gets in such a mood your dress is spoiled in the making, or for want of its timely completion you are unable to meet your appointments, and so your plans, for a week or a month, are frustrated, to the great disappointment of yourself and others.

We believe, however, that, with all their imperfections, the Double-thread family have been of use in their day.

In the mechanic arts, original perfection is unknown; both origin and progress must here precede the finished and perfect result. This is at least the general rule, and to this rule the Iron Seamstress constitutes no exception. In her case, there was first the idea, (two threads), crudely embodied in the complex, and for a time impracticable, instrument of Lowe. Next followed a *Pro* of inventors, born of the same faith, and wedded to the same idea, who, aiming at nothing higher, succeeded in so improving his invention as to adapt it to practical use—in the work-shop—and in the hands of those housekeepers endowed with super-feminine skill. Third and last comes a bolder genius—of original conceptions, a more simple faith, and a higher aim. He, regardless alike of the opinions and prejudices of others, goes back to first principles. He asks himself, Why is it that all sewing machines yet invented are so often out of order? He investigates, and finds the cause in their complicated mechanism. Again he traces the cause of that complication to the use of an extra thread; and again he inquires, Is an extra thread necessary? Reflection answers, No; at least not if a relative stitch can be made without it. Again he asks himself, Can this be done? He thinks it can; and setting himself to work, he at length succeeds in the invention of a new stitch—made of one thread only, yet as secure as any made of two. The "under-thread," now no longer necessary, is cast aside, and with it go all its resulting complications. He constructs an instrument embodying the principles thus discovered; and that instrument is now rapidly superseding the older ones.

This has the Iron Seamstress grown to her present estate; and therefore the Double-thread family—as the introduction to a better class—performed an important part in these results. Nor is it to be denied that they have been practically useful, both in the workshop and in families where the requisite skill is possessed. But for general household use, they are too complicated, noisy, and troublesome.

A lady correspondent, who has had much experience with this kind of help, and who is therefore competent to judge, has favored us with a written statement of her experience in these words:

"I formerly had in my employ, at different times, four of these Double-thread seamstresses, each for a period of one or more years; and I have to confess that my experience with each was nearly the same, and not altogether satisfactory. When my husband was at home to help me out of my difficulties, I managed, usually, to get along pretty well; but when he was absent, and especially when Miss Double-thread had been idle awhile, I was often in trouble; and that trouble was sometimes rendered doubly vexatious by the exalted opinion Miss Double-thread entertained of herself, and the provoking way she had of showing it.

"It offended her to be even suspected of the slightest imperfection.—For, 'Wasn't she acknowledged to be first-class?' 'Wasn't she admitted to the best society?' 'Aye, 'Was she not a Double-thread? Who then should say a word disrespectful of her ladyship?' 'Was she ever known to give?' 'Hah! she is a beautiful face—like on both sides?' 'Didn't the tailors employ her?'—and the collar manufacturers?—and the shirt manufacturers?—and the shoe-makers?—and the manufacturers of hats and caps? Who then should presume to doubt her superiority?"

"Again, getting on her high-heeled boots, and raising her voice to a higher pitch, she would break out thus:—'Who could show such a record as hers—all glorious within and without—or sport so many jewels, in 'premure' of gold, and silver, and brass?—or, soaring yet higher, 'What seamstress had ever been decked, like her, with ribbons and garters imperial? with legions of knightly honors—direct from the Emperor's own right hand?'"

"Her virtues thus established, objections would be disposed of in a manner equally conclusive:—'What if she did have "fits" sometimes? Hadn't she a right to indulge in that luxury as well as other ladies?' Or, 'What if she did break a few needles daily—and snap the thread occasionally—and confuse things generally? Surely no one should think to complain of these little fallings. Had not other first-class seamstresses the same?' Or, 'What if she hadn't any joint in her elbow, and so had to work with a *stiff* arm, and a *stiff* needle to match it? If this were

a fault, she, like thousands of her kin, was not without good compensations? And, lastly, 'Why should she be expected to consult the feelings of mistress or others? Did they consult hers; and were not her rights as sacred as theirs? They had gone their way all summer, while she was left in waiting, and she would have her way now—long enough, at least, to teach mistress the art of self-government under provocation—though it did cost the peace of the household.'"

"With these exalted ideas in her head, it was often, as you will readily believe, a difficult task to keep Miss Double-thread at her work; and what work she did, was sometimes so badly done that I was obliged to take it all out—a distressing job—and do it over by hand. And these difficulties were so frequent and troublesome that, as a choice of evils, I did a large portion of my sewing in those days by hand, without calling on Miss Double-thread at all.

"Of course my patience was often sorely tried, and as often I wondered if there could be no remedy. At length relief came, in the person of Miss Wilcox-Gibbs, a young seamstress of singular virtues and rare accomplishments, but so unassuming that I, like many others, was at first inclined to doubt her qualifications. After a little delay I concluded to give her a trial; and the result was so satisfactory that I soon discharged Miss Double-thread, and invited Miss Wilcox-Gibbs to occupy her place, which she has done ever since to my entire satisfaction.

"The name and fame of the Misses Wilcox-Gibbs (they are now a numerous family) are already spread far and wide, and they have little need of recommendation from any source; yet my Miss Gibbs has been such excellent help, and I feel under so great obligation to her, that I esteem it a privilege as well as a duty to speak a good word for the lady. I have already influenced several of my family friends and acquaintances to make the exchange that I did, and the result has in every instance been equally satisfactory. Indeed it could not well be otherwise; for the Misses Gibbs are all alike, and what is perfection with me, must also be perfection with others. There is no such thing as Miss Double-thread. There may be a general family resemblance, but in action and temperament they differ as widely as servants of different nationalities. In fact, you never know, when you select a Double-thread seamstress, what you are getting—*if* you have proved her.

"But the Misses Wilcox-Gibbs, as I said before, are all exactly alike—at least they are so personally. The only difference is in their dress. You certainly could not distinguish them by any difference in size, form, features, or action; in capacity or disposition; by the quality of their work, nor yet by their *voice*? In the faculty last named they are quite peculiar; indeed, their conversation is always in a whisper, and so low as not in the least to disturb the conversation of others.

"While on the subject of changing seamstresses, I want to add that the practice is becoming quite common in the circle of my acquaintance; and I am told that a very considerable portion of the applications received for the services of the Misses Wilcox-Gibbs are from ladies who have previously employed one of the Misses Double-thread.

"As to my own experience with Miss Wilcox-Gibbs, I can say that, as soon as she was fairly settled in her new home she went right to work, and in a few days had our wardrobe in complete order; and it has never been otherwise from that day to this, a period of nearly seven years. In all that time she has not given the slightest occasion for reproach. Nor has she had one "fit"! Indeed, I am not aware that she has ever been ill for a moment. Certainly we have had no doctor's bills to pay for her, which is a fact of some importance in her favor as compared with any seamstress of the Double-thread family that I have ever employed. The amount of bills we paid for our Miss Lock-stitch, on account of surgical aid and medical advice, was truly frightful. I don't know the exact sum, but I think it exceeded the value of all the work she ever did for us.

"I have, however, somewhat more to say of Miss Wilcox-Gibbs. She minds her own business, has no company, and is always ready for duty. Whenever we intend making a journey I scarcely need to let her know it—and every garment needed is found ready at the appointed time. So also on our return, the same watchful eye and ready hand go almost instinctively to work, and the family wardrobe is again put in order—often long before our other servants get fairly broken in.

"Miss Wilcox-Gibbs has also a peculiar facility for making friends. If, on being introduced at a new place, she happen to meet with a cold reception—as she sometimes does, on account of the prejudices which those in the interest of the Misses Double-thread are active in disseminating—it never disconcerts her, and she never fails to dispel that prejudice on a very slight acquaintance. Her quiet, lady-like, and winning way of receiving and treating strangers, has the effect to put every one at ease in her company. She is also a great favorite with children. When not otherwise employed, she often amuses them by making frocks and aprons for their dolls; and no matter how roughly they use her, she never gets out of temper, or becomes otherwise unfit for instant service when her mistress calls.

"She is also on intimate terms with the feeble and the aged, who find in her an agreeable companion and a sympathizing friend. She never has any difficulty with the other servants, and I doubt if she has an enemy in the world. Even the Misses Lock-stitch, and all the other members of the Double-thread family—though professionally her rivals, are personally her admirers if not her friends. My own Miss Lock-stitch used often to say:—'What a charming little seamstress Miss Wilcox-Gibbs is! If she only had another string to her bow—so that she could go into first-class society—how delighted I should be with her company!' And though I did not then appreciate her admiration of Miss Wilcox-Gibbs, not being acquainted with her myself, I could not help saying, in a half-joking way, 'Never mind, my dear, you may see the day when you will wish that you had one string less to your bow!'"

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lately got a new idea of the practicability and real benefit of a family sewing-machine.

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OVERWORKED WOMEN.—"An overworked woman is always a sad sight—sadder, a great deal, than an overworked man, because she is much more fertile in capacities of suffering than a man. She has so many varieties of headaches—sometimes as if Jael were driving the nail that killed Sisera into her temples, sometimes letting her work with half her brain while the other half throbs as if it would go to pieces, sometimes tightening around the brows as if her cap-band were Luke's iron crown—and then her neuralgias, and her backaches, and her fits of depression, in which she thinks she is nothing, and those paroxysms which men speak lightly of as hysterical—convulsions, that is all, only not commonly fatal ones—so many trials which belong to her fine and noble structure, that she is always entitled to pity when she is placed in conditions which develop her nervous tendencies.

Every word true as preaching. It is a sad sight to see an overworked woman; but its sadness is increased by the fact that her toils might be alleviated, and her burdens lessened, if men would but consider. Why should our mothers, wives, and daughters be compelled to labor day after day, and not unfrequently night after night, doing up the sewing of the family, when a comparatively trifling outlay would purchase a machine with which all this tedious, health-wasting work could be done in a fourth of the time, and in a better manner? We have in our family, and have had for years, and always intend to have, a neat, noiseless, simple sewing machine, that never gets out of order, may be operated by a child, does its work with almost inconceivable rapidity, and in the best possible manner; never misses a stitch, uses but a single thread, and promises to last for a century. We tried one of these machines first. After using it a while we were foolishly persuaded to believe there were better kinds. We exchanged our old machine for one of the better kind, and this for a second, said to be as superior one, and this second superior one for a machine declared to be the best of all, and wound up our trading operations by going back to our first love, and ordered the Wilcox & Gibbs Noiseless Sewing Machine, the one above all others which we would recommend for family purposes.

This is indeed an age of invention, of progress, and of improvement. One mind conceives a new idea; another grasps the idea and makes it practical; but the highest state of perfection is rarely ever reached by the first or second effort. Many trials, difficulties, and discouragements must be encountered and endured before complete success can be attained. A forcible illustration of this truth is the gradual development of the wonderful LETTER "G" from the first crude idea of sewing by machinery. For a long time two threads were deemed essential in the construction of sewing machines. Hence the necessary complications of every production. But finally it occurred to one of the most thoughtful of our modern inventors that one thread had ever been regarded as sufficient for hand-sewing. Then from analogy he reasoned that one thread alone ought to be employed in a machine supplying the place of hand labor. Acting upon this theory, he soon achieved a success altogether unprecedented in the history of sewing machines.

The first invention was not more remarkable or meritorious than this last, while its results were far less valuable to the world. The first established that machine sewing was possible. The last demonstrated the practical utility of sewing machines for general family use. The first was composed of many parts, and required a skilled operator to manage it. The last is a perfect marvel of simplicity, and can be

Unfortunately Born with Nerves.

The "busy hum of labor" is a poetical idea enough, but unfortunately some of us are born with nerves; and I confess that the monotonous whir, whir, whir of a Sewing Machine in the house has sometimes sent me out of it. I have often wondered if this could not

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Spare the Women.

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An experimental trial solicited.

Note.—So well assured am I that a thorough trial of the Wilcox & Gibbs' Family Sewing Machine cannot fail to convince even the most skeptical that it is beyond all question "the best Machine in the world," I freely offer to all who will receive them, the gratuitous use of Machines for one month.

The remarkable simplicity of the Wilcox & Gibbs improved Family Sewing Machine, the noiselessness of its movements, the speed, ease, and accuracy with which a child may successfully work it, and the large range of sewing to which it is pre-eminently adapted, have already established for it an enviable distinction among the FIRST-CLASS SEWING MACHINES OF THE AGE.

Did you ever dream that the drudgery of sewing would one day become the cheerful pastime? Did you ever believe that little polished seamstresses would step into your sewing-room, and with scarcely a breath of noise, make up your entire wardrobe? Did you ever think that a sewing-machine would do all your work, even in the hands of your servant girl, without the complaint of "out of order," "useless," which is so often, and too justly, made of sewing-machines generally? Any one who will watch the operation of the Wilcox & Gibbs machine for ten minutes, while, in the hands of a little girl, it throws out the most delicate hems and falls in absolute perfection—cuts its triumphs in beautiful letters, figures, and wreaths, in rich embroidery and fashionable braid—now sewing in a sleeve or sewing on a skirt of your dress, and now flashing over yards of seam with but the flutter of a swallow's wing—will cer-

tainly get a new idea of the practicability and real benefit of a family sewing-machine.

be remedied without impairing its usefulness. This I find Wilcox & Gibbs have succeeded in doing. "Silent Sewing Machines"—the name attracted me—"Silent!" I find that one can easily listen to reading while operating it. This seems to me a great gain on all that have preceded it. My dressmaker, who has had ten years' experience with sewing machines, gives this her unqualified preference. I myself have owned one of another make for eight years, which, in my judgment, does not approach this in utility. For all the reasons above stated I give my hearty preference to the "Wilcox & Gibbs Silent Sewing Machine."—Fanny Fern.

used with the greatest freedom and success by a mere child. The first was capable of but a small range of plain stitching. The last embraces almost the entire scope of household sewing. The first was poorly constructed and liable to frequent disorder. The last is the very perfection of mechanism.

Mrs. Henry Ward Beecher, in a letter to the